



Hinds County Detention Services

Chapter 15: Inmate Communications	Subject: MAIL
Effective Date:	
Pages:	Policy Number: 15-100

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POLICY: Hinds County Detention Services' (HCDS) CDS' mail services provides for normalized, the safe and secure corresponding communication between inmates and their families, friends and legal representatives, and promotes the reception of entertainment and educational materials. The amount of mail an inmate sends or receives is unlimited provided it is at the inmate's expense. Indigent inmates receive a reasonable allowance of postage and writing materials. Any infringement on the volume, content, and inspection of mail is based solely on legitimate security, safety, and legal requirements.

PROCEDURE:

15-101 MAIL SERVICES

1. Inmates, regardless of their status, are afforded the same mail privileges. Mail privileges are not withdrawn as punishment.
2. Excluding weekends and holidays, incoming and outgoing letters are not held longer than 24 hours. Mail is not withheld ~~or read~~ unless there is clear and convincing evidence that such correspondence poses a clear threat to the safety and security of the facility or is being used in the furtherance of illegal activities. Any decision or action regarding withholding ~~or reading~~ incoming or outgoing mail is made by the Detention Administrator. Inmates are notified if mail is withheld, and the reason for withholding mail.
3. Inmates may subscribe to, and receive through the mail, newspapers, magazines, educational or correspondence materials and books which have been shipped directly



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from a publisher, bookstore, or book distributor (e.g., Amazon.com). Books must be paperback or have a soft cover. An invoice that matches the contents must accompany the shipment. Exceptions include:

- a. Violate U.S. Postal Regulations.
- b. Advocate the violent overthrow of the U.S. Government or of any state government.
- c. Advocate violence or rebellion against government authority under which the inmate is held.
- d. Show or describe the manufacture or fabrication of weapons.
- e. Any potentially pornographic material
- f. Contents do not match the invoice.
- g. may send or receive mail with the exceptions of nude or explicitly sexual photos, metal, glass, receipts or money orders or copies of money orders, nude or exceptionally explicit photos, video tapes, CDs, hardback books, food items, hygiene products, medical items, writing materials, or stamps.

1. All inmates have the right to receive and send mail unless restrictions are implemented due to disciplinary actions, investigation, Mail of inmates who are transferred or held at facility transfer, and/or placement with another agency for court and/or temporary housing. In most cases, mail is stored or forwarded to the addressee, if possible.
- 2.
- 3.4. Mail addressed to inmates who are transferred to another agency for permanent housing, such as the Department of Corrections, is forwarded to the agency or returned to sender.
- 4.5. Mail is held for investigative purposes or because it violates provisions of this policy is stored, and handled in a secured manner which is intended to prevent theft, tampering, delay, or other interference.
- 5.6. Mail officers wear personal protective gear to include face mask/shield and gloves when opening mail and packages.
- 6.7. Mail officers deliver incoming mail to the inmates to whom it is addressed. At no time is mail distributed by visitors, an inmate or otherwise accessible to any inmate other than the addressee.
7. No correspondence or printed material is delivered to inmates by visitors. Mail officers are responsible for the delivery of privileged mail directly to the inmate.

Commented [KA1]: I think this need to be operationalized. Is this in reference to when mail enters the facility? This should be combined with the incoming mail section.

15-102 CORESPONDENCE MATERIALS MAIL CATEGORIES

1. Legal and privileged correspondence is inmate~~s~~ includes mail that goes addressed only to or from:



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- a. An attorney representing the inmate in litigation of record or one that the inmate is attempting to retain for such purpose.
- b. Federal or State elected or law enforcement officials
- c. Court Officials
- d. Officials of the Department of Corrections including probation and parole officials
- e. Government organizations

2. Legal Mail sent from inmates is inspected by detention staff for contraband in the presence of the inmate prior to being sealed. If there is any question as to whether an addressee fits the definition of legal mail, the letter/package is held for not more than 24 hours to resolve the question.

3. Legal mail addressed to an inmate is opened by detention staff in the presence of the inmate. Detention staff ensures that the contents of letters from these persons are free of contraband and are, in fact, official or legal correspondence from the person whose name and return address appears on the outside of the envelope or package. The correspondence is not read beyond what is necessary to make this determination.

4. Personal mail: All correspondence not covered in Section 15-102(1).

- a. Mailroom staff read, censor, or reject correspondence based on legitimate institutional interests of order and security.
- b. Mailroom staff refer specific questions of censorship to the Detention Administrator.

5. The Detention Administrator or designee prohibits an inmate from sending or receiving any item of personal mail (to include publications) if the content of the item contains any material that threatens to undermine the security and order of the facility, or the mail contains contraband or other material which cannot be lawfully sent through the mail.

a. The reasons for censorship are:

- i. The mail contains threats of physical harm against any person or threats of criminal activity.
- ii. The mail threatens blackmail or extortion.
- iii. The mail concerns sending contraband in or out of the detention facility including stamps, or cash or stickers.
- iv. The mail concerns plans to escape.
- v. The mail concerns plans to violate departmental rules and policies necessary to maintain security and control.
- vi. The mail concerns plans for criminal activity or violations of state or federal laws.
- vii. The mail concerns information that if communicated would create a clear and present danger of violence and physical harm.
- viii. The mail contains sexually explicit material which by its nature or content poses a threat to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution or facilitates criminal activity.
- ix. The mail contains photographs which in any way supports, incites, promotes, encourages, or advocates any type of gang activity.



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- b. The Hinds County Detention CenterServices maintains institution security for both inmates and staff ——members and facilitates to the extent possible rehabilitation of inmates. No publication or material will be withheld solely on the basis of its appeal to a ——particular ethnic, racial or religious group. A publication may not be rejected ——solely because its content is religious, philosophical, political, social or sexual, or —because its content is unpopular or repugnant.
- c. Materials which pose a threat to safety objectives may do so either directly or indirectly. Direct threats include but are not limited to the active advocacy of escape, interference with security devices, or violence against staff or others. Indirect threats to these objectives include but are not limited to:
- i. Materials which advocate or facilitate collective action or affiliation by inmates either generally or with respect to validated Security Threat Groups;
 - ii. Materials which impede inmate rehabilitation including any item or depiction which encourages or reinforces the perception of other persons as potential objects for physical or sexual aggression.
6. A determination is made by Mailroom Staff to approve or disapprove materials for receipt or possession by inmates on a case-by-case and/or an issue-by-issue basis in accordance with the criteria listed in Section 15-102 (4) and the recommendation is made to the Detention Administrator for final approval. Should a publication be disapproved, the following procedures apply:
- a. The inmate is notified in writing and given the right to appeal. The appeal is forwarded to the Detention Administrator for final disposition within 72 hours of receipt of the appeal.
 - b. If the appeal is denied, the inmate is notified in writing.
 - c. If the appeal is approved, the inmate is provided the publication.
- a. Correspondence to law-enforce
7. Correspondence between confinement facilities is generally prohibited. Exceptions are authorized by the Detention Administrator.
8. Indigent inmates are those who have \$0.00 in his/her account for a period of at least sixty (60) days. Inmates who do not have sufficient funds to mail personal letters shall be issued one (1) pen per month, as well as four stamps, envelopes and ten (10) sheets of paper twice a month.
8. Standard correspondence is general mail, including letters and pictures from family, friends, church groups or other groups that do not fall under legal mail.



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2. Privileged correspondence is mail between an inmate and federal officials, including the President of the United States, a Senator or Congressman, officials of any U.S. Department or agency, and all members and employees of the State Probation and Parole Board.
9. Inmate to inmate correspondence is only approved for immediate family members. A copy of a marriage license, birth certificate, or finalized adoption papers must be mailed into the mailroom to verify the relationship of the inmates wishing to correspond. The State of Mississippi does not recognize common law marriage.

Commented [KA2]: This is a HUGE restriction on mail, and may not be legal. I think this may require some operational discussion.

15-103 INCOMING MAIL / PUBLICATIONS

1. All incoming mail is delivered to and inspected by opened and censored by the Mailroom Officer Staff at Raymond Detention Center and the Work Center, at RDC.
2. All incoming mail is logged and screened into the mail data log, in order to track and account for all incoming mail.
3. The incoming mail is photocopied with the original stored in the inmates' property and the copy going to the inmate. All correspondence is and documented in the inmates' confinement record.
- 3.4. Mailroom staff deliver incoming mail to inmates daily Monday – Friday.
4. Incoming mail delivery interruptions occur when discrepancies are found that violate the facilities' mail protocol.
5. When inmates provide for his or her own postage there is no limit on the number of letters he/she can send or receive.
- 6.5. Publications must be preapproved and must not require a signature for delivery or monetary payment or subscription.

Commented [KA3]: Is all mail delivered to RDC or does it go to each facility?

Commented [KA4]: It seems that this is an unnecessary step and VERY staff intensive...we should talk.

Commented [KB5R5]: With the large volume of drugs that were coming in and OUT through the mail, this was their response to the issue. We are working with Securus to add their mail service to our contract so mail would go to their processing center and get scanned to inmate tablets. This will eliminate the issues of narcotics, the waste or human resources, and the storage of all that mail.

15-104 RETURNED MAIL / FORWARDED MAIL

1. Mail that is addressed to a transferred or released inmate who has been transferred or released from the facility is either forwarded to the transferred housing agency if known or returned to sender within seven days of receiving. Similarly, mail is returned to sending if an inmate's name does not appear on the envelope.
2. Any mail that is prohibited mail as outlined in Section 15-102 (5) above is because it does not meet the required standards of mail protocol, such as photos exhibiting nudity or explicit behavior, security risk group signs and communications, and threats to do harm, are returned to the sender, and an investigation may be warranted.
3. The inmates may reserve the right to refuse mail from a particular sender (standard mail only); the request to return to sender is honored.



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15-105 CONTRABAND

1. All incoming and outgoing mail is searched to prevent the introduction and/or transfer of contraband and communication that promotes threats to do harm, interferes with communication of security risk group threats, and plans treacherous or criminal activities, which includes but limited to the following: plans for sending contraband in or out of the facility, threats of blackmail or extortion, plans for escape or unauthorized entry, plans for activities that violate facility rules, information which if communicated would create threat to impose or present a danger of violence and physical harm to staff or inmates, and letters that contain pornographic materials.

2.1. Any inmate may not exceed a maximum of six reading materials, such as books or magazines, and may not exceed the possession of six photos. Any mail beyond the allowed this is considered contraband and will be removed and placed in the inmate's personal property. All perishable items received are disposed of.

3.2. Any items identified as contraband are confiscated, an incident report is generated, and an investigation may be warranted if a Criminal Investigation is initiated.

Commented [KA6]: Felicia, this should be stated one time and then reference. I think each of these are slightly different.

Outgoing mail is read????

Also, #2 and 3 need to be combined.

The Criminal investigations section is duplicated and there is no explanation of who/how this decision is made.

Are perishable items thrown away?

15-106 OUTGOING MAIL

1. All outgoing mail is stamped "Inmate Mail" and the envelop is addressed with:

- a. Inmate's full name, Hinds County Detention Center/Work Center, and address.
- b. Addressee's name (no nick names) and address.

2. All outgoing mail is collected from inmates during 3rd shift and is mailed out by Mailroom staff daily Monday-Friday.

1. There is no limit as to how many letters the inmates can receive whether standard, privileged, or legal.

Commented [KA7]: Need to address where inmates place outgoing mail; who picks it up; and if there are any requirements to place return address information. Is all mail stamped that it comes from a detention facility.

May want to reference Sexual Safety policy re: sending mail to certain providers.

Commented [KB8]: Moved content.

Lee Vance Marshand K. Crisler, Sheriff

Date: _____

EXHIBIT NO. D-99
CAUSE NO. 3:16-cv-0484-CWR-RHWK
WITNESS E. Simpson
CLERK: TWANA SUMMERS

FEB 23 2022

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI
Condice Crane, REPORTER